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THE

# HEROIC SUCCESSION.

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ORATION

BY

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SECOND ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

DEATH OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

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## THE HEROIC SUCCESSION.

The hour brings the man! Whenever a great and worthy cause approaches its life trial, some champion is always ordained of God to arise and defend it. The Almighty sits above all earthly clouds wherein mortals grope doubtfully. His Will forever shapes the past toward the present, and the present toward the future.

He buries the seed that it may fructify in its season.

Therefore, under the eye of Omniscience, four centuries ago, a ship-boy of Genoa pored over his father's charts, and studied stars and books, that he might, thereafter, in good time, discover this Western Continent.

Therefore, fleeing from their birth-places, abiding in exile, storm-tossed on waves, and wind-driven from their havens, the pioneers of American Independence landed, at last, upon the barren beaches of New England.

Therefore, a century later, trained, as a boy in paths of peril, and called, as a man, to fields of patriotic labor, the chief WASHINGTON became his nation's leader.

And therefore, in another century, a child was born beneath the humble rafters of a Western log-hut, who was to grow up, under the Providence of God, and be known among nations as ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the Liberator.

For the Eternal One, who rules all peoples, had been before these men. His measuring rod had marked the work they were to do. His unerring foresight had traced the lines they were to follow. And to the comprehension of democratic faith there is a noble harmony in the various characters and forces that have been precursors of our Republic. There is a divine symmetry in the relations which they hold to one another—Columbus discovering, the Pilgrims consecrating, Washington defending, Lincoln emancipating. I cannot separate these representative men from the marchings of our Republic. One treads behind another; the first prophesies the last; the last fulfills the first, and all of them are promises of what is yet to come.

From time to time, during the last twenty years, two significant words have passed current among the people. Those two words, "Manifest Destiny," were flippantly bandied from mouth to mouth, carelessly printed in newspapers, lightly quoted by political speakers. Few who repeated them paused to ponder upon their prophetic value beyond the narrow limit of national aggrandizement. Theoretically, they implied territorial expansion, Cuban revolution, Mexican colonization. Practically illustrated, their meaning took definite form in the annexation of Texas, the conquest of California, the absorption of a neighboring Republic's border lands. Figuratively used by the stump orator, they predicted an "extension of the area of freedom." Beyond this flight of fancy they were not interpreted by the orators of party or the priests of progress.

But the vital idea of "manifest destiny" lies deeper than mere material advancement. It finds place in the popular apprehension with that other pregnant idea which is conceived in the "Monroe Doctrine." Both of these ideas are restless predictions of an American future. Both are impatient aspirations toward the commissioned work of our Republic. Both are perceptions of the great fact that this Western Continent was reserved from the beginning to be the theatre of a human drama, to which all other human dramas, of past and present, are but prologues and accessories, whether their characters and scenery be Asian, African, European or American.

For myself, I have an abiding faith in this reservation of the New World for some grand purpose ordained in the beginning. To me there is more than a mere sequence of chances discovered in the March of terrestrial events, converging historically and actually toward our own Republic. I acknowledge a Higher Law in the Reformation, the French Revolution, the Independence of American nationalities. I perceive the links of a chain in the epochs of discovery which gave us printing, steam, electricity. I accept as designed the irruptions of

change in Old World nations. I welcome as means, ordained to an end, all "manifestations of destiny," such as our New World wars, emancipations, immigrations and expansions. Each event is an advance, each consequence is a march; the present is a campaign, the future is conquest. Progressive design, symmetric co-working are discoverable in all history. Providence is the pioneer of humanity. A handwriting of judgment is upon the walls of Old World nationalities; but the fire and cloud of renewed leadership move evermore before our New World republics.

Thus, in our day, "manifest destiny" becomes a soothing saying. The people are their own prophets. A wonderful thought, destined to ripen into marvelous action, may for years lie germinating under popular sympathy, before it shall become recognized by governments or leaders. There were many forerunners of the Reformation, and of its champion, Martin Luther. Albigenese and Waldense had died for *protesting*, long before Protestantism became the name of a revolution. Wicliff, Huss, Savanorola, Jerome, Galileo, Melancthon, Calvin: these were not creations, but the created of religious inquiry; they were the bright crests of waves; a human ocean was under them, upforcing them. Leaders cannot make a revolution; they only manifest it. It was conceived before them, through the necessity which called for it. In the fullness of time and occasion it is born, and they are born with it.

How long before our American Revolution was the seed sown for it? Certainly as far back as the time when independent believers sailed away, self-exiled, from England to Holland; assuredly at as remote a period as that of St. Bartholomew's massacres. Centuries, doubtless, held the seed in their bosom before it fructified on Bunker Hill and at Yorktown.

So with all growths of moral or material circumstances. So with all germination of progress, shaping thought into action under silence and through lapses of time. I am dropping a grain toward future harvesting. Much or little, it must find place in the hereafter of fruition. It matters not whether my agency be recognized or remain unnoted. A seed is no more or less a seed, whether Paul plant it, or it be dropped by Paul's jailor unknowingly. A great fruitage bloomed in the Reformation, and much of it was from seeds sown by obscure monks and nameless pilgrims, ages before; men who, dying, left no visible footprint, yet whose ideas, falling by the wayside, had become seed-corn to bourgeois above their ashes, into harvests ripe for the sickle of Luther.

When Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492, it was full time for the discovery.

Kingcraft had had ample trial. It is coeval in history with the ambition of man; for the first restive son who left a patriarch's roof, and led forth his dependents into wilderness chieftdom, was the embryonic type of royalism in mankind. All giant despotisms of ancient days—dynasties of Assur and Ninus, and the Pharaohs and Ptolemies, and the monarchies of Medes and Persians—were but aggregations of tribes and castes, each governed by its tyrant or priest. When men grew weary of republican tribe-life, they soon enough found masters and chiefs to goad or curb them. So, through all ages, arbitrary rule has had field and scope of experiment; and it is because no single man, or class of men, can possess the divine wisdom necessary to govern other classes, that the experiment has always resulted in misery to mankind.

The Hebrews, in their stubbornness, prayed for a king, and the parable of the bramble failed to warn them of their folly. So, at their petition, arose Saul. After him came war, rebellion, disunion, captivity and dispersion.

Continually, in all nations, the folly and crime of civil strife, of sectional jealousy, of hatreds fomented between rich and poor, have been visited at length, as in the Hebrew commonwealth, by that scourge of the people—

kingcraft. When the frogs of fable desired to establish a monarchy, a log was given them for their king, and when they still murmured, because the log lay motionless, a royal stork was sent, to make them his daily food. But of what avail are the wisdom of Jotham's parable or Aesop's fable to men who exalt tyranny above liberty? True it is, that the gods, when they purpose to destroy a people, first make that people mad.

Greece, the land of classic republics, with grand traditions and glorious records, now pays her taxes to support a foreign-born prince upon his throne at Athens. Italy, forgetful of Caesars and Neros and Caligulas, accepts her Sardinian dynasty as the recompense of a hundred struggles for freedom. France, rejecting the lessons of three revolutions, grovels in imperial dust, and crowns a murderous usurper with the laurels of Caesar. And Holland, no longer dreaming of that sturdy Dutch republic which once braved the world, contents herself with monarchy and obscurity.

The old experiment—the never-satisfying endeavor of one man to rule millions; the mummery and sham of royalty; the authority of salaried and sinecured officials and orders, with titles to their baptismal names and parchment claims to be higher and better than their fellow mortals—the servile mob, the tax-paying traders, the toiling artisans—the People! Everywhere repeated, this hoary imposture, kingcraft, still imposes upon Christians as well as heathens. The spectacle is forever revealed to us of privileged castes and of pariahs with neither rights nor privileges. We need not go to India or to China to behold a circle of sacredness drawn around a few human beings, while the many are excluded and degraded. We witness a like hideous contrast, under the symbols of civilization, in France, in England, in all the kingdoms of Christendom.

Yet there is no divine precept for inequality. Nature has her mountains and her plains, her giants and her pigmies, her oaks and her reeds; but the mountain, the giant, the oak are no more perfect or pretentious, each in its limit, than are the plain, the pigmy and the reed. A star, in its orbit, fills the orbit; a snail, in its shell, fills the shell; each is symmetric with its destiny, as fixed by eternal law, and there is no inequality in their conditions, since both fulfill the purposes for which they were created. Who, then, shall deny equality to mankind—to each his complement and fullness, according to capacity of nature? Who shall prescribe bounds to the claim or right of a single human being to be and to enjoy all that nature fits him for? With brain, frame, limbs, proportions, senses and faculties inherent in me, who shall deny me equality of right to fill such measure of life and action as my relative capacity can compass? Therefore it is that through all the years of human progression, from savagism to refinement, the yearning for equality, and the claim; of equal and exact justice to all men, have been manifested in revolutions and reformation.

I have faith, however, in the ultimate triumph of democratic, protesting manhood over kingcraft and nobility. The victories of the people are progressive. Assyrian despotisms, and Persian tyrannies, and Macedonian monarchies gave way to Roman empire. This was progress. Roman armies overran barbarous nations. More progress. Christianity arose and subjugated heathenism. Loftier progress still. Roman authority carried the new religion to remotest western tribes. Mahomet, meanwhile, sprang up with his creed of Islam, and taught to the idolatrous East a worship of one God only. Thus to the Orient and the Occident progress still marched. A Christian Bible evangelized Europe: a Moslem Koran enlightened Asia and Africa. These movements were progressive. The Crusades were marches forward, bringing nations and people together that had been strangers—combining Christian interests as barriers against the career of Mahomet's successors. Feudal ages, with their chivalry, were progressive. Even serfdoms were ameliorations of ancient slavery. In good time serfdom and vassalage gave way before progressive democracy, which constantly wrote its protest against op-

pression, sometimes in blood upon the block or fire at the stake; sometimes in insurrections; sometimes in revolutions, that changed rulers and ended dynasties. Gunpowder leaped up, then, with a democratic shock, against steel-clad knights and stone castles. But there was a greater democrat than Schwartz or Friar Bacon to come afterward, with a democratic force in his hand stronger than gunpowder. This was John Fust, the printer, the workman, who made a Great Reformation possible, and without whose forerunning Luther might have remained silent in his cell at Erfurt. Thus the march of progress began to broaden through centuries. So we may trace the orderings of Divine Wisdom, age after age, and generation after generation—from the years of Hebrew prophets down to the years of Luther, and John Huss, and Zwingli, and Cromwell, and Mirabeau.

The experiment of kingcraft had ample scope during all these cycles. But this world of ours is a wide one, and human government must be studied out, like other philosophies and sciences. If years were numbered by thousands, and centuries by scores, before gunpowder and the printing press could be evolved, it is no wonder that republicanism halted, or that democracy could not make head. But there was another discovery to follow that of Schwartz and Fust. Columbus was to discover a New World.

Now comes the solution of problems that perplexed like sphinx riddles in all ages. A New World is a new field for the old experiment. The Eternal Ruler of Nations permits this conflict between kingcraft and democracy to remain undecided on three Continents; but a fourth continent is opened, and in its destiny the governing problem will be solved.

So, while Luther thunders his democratic protests against Pope and Kaiser, while gunpowder roars at the gates of Feudalism, and the Printing Press steadily undermines old fortresses of error and prejudice; an obscure mariner awakens gradually to the perception of another great truth. Christoval Colon declared that land existed beyond the Ultima Thule of ancient geographers, and at last the gates of the New World were opened. In this New World—during uncounted centuries—the experiments of kingcraft and of republicanism had been going on, just as in the Old World. Despotism on the one hand, democratic tribes on the other, divided the aboriginal nationalities. Columbus was to herald annihilation to all these New World systems. What mighty expiation had become necessary for some vast crime of the past we cannot tell; but that coming of Columbus, we know, was the forerunner of extinction to nations without a history—to generations destitute of chronicles.

It matters not, after the great work of Columbus was achieved, whether he suffered or was rewarded by Ferdinand and Isabella, monarchs of Castile and Arragon. Biographers of the Genoese mariner tell us of trials and disappointments, and reverses, endured by this man of the people. We read that, after giving islands and continents to Spain, he was repaid only by ingratitude and cruelty. Cast into chains by a rival, who supercedes him in command, the discover of America returns heart-broken to the country which he enriched. Ferdinand and Isabella attempt to reconcile him, and they punish his enemy. But Columbus preserves his fetters as memorials of royal generosity. Wherever he goes, those manacles accompany him. They hang over his bed at night. He commands that they shall be buried in his coffin.

Rest, now! Christopher Columbus! Thy grave is in the New World! a world sacred to the experiment of Freedom. Thou wert the pioneer of God's purposes that are to be developed upon American soil. Kingcraft and nobility have had their trial during many thousands of years, in all realms of three continents; the fourth continent is for Freedom. The experiment of Manhood under Heavenly protection, is for the New World. The problem of Equality is to be worked out to a solution above the ashes of extinct and unrecorded nations of the Past—above the dust of heroic Columbus mingling with the earth of his Discovery.



History teems with mere physical heroes. No nation is without its traditions of strong men and fierce war-chiefs, whose natures were sanguinary and whose deeds were murderous. Mankind has always reverence, courage, exalting its "mighty hunters" into kings, and worshipping its departed warriors as demi-gods. From the days of Nimrod to the time of Charles the Swede, and Napoleon the Corsican, myriads of champions have flung their gauntlets into the arena of life, and multitudes of conquerors have ridden over humanity. The archives of centuries are filled with title-deeds to renown; the songs of generations rehearse the exploits of leaders; the galleries of every age preserve its trophies and its armor; the crypts of the great past contain the ashes of captains, and the effigies of commanders, whose restless ambition once "kept the world awake," but whose very names have now faded out of note or mention. How little indeed of mortal distinction survives to posterity beyond the mere name of that mortal who achieved it. Of all the glory of these conquerors of men how little that is ennobling or enduring, can be redeemed from the waters of oblivion; those dull, black waves, that, year by year, wash off the jutting headlands of fame, and undermine the crumbling bases of shrines that seemed sealed to immortality!

Back then into Lethean shadows, let phantom heroes vanish, with all the blood-printed chronicles of their material existence! Worthier to dwell upon is the living fact that, from the mob of Caesars, we can summon forth a few full-statured men, uncrowned but kingly, who look into our souls with eyes of command, and control us from above, as planets control the ocean tides. Thus, white and shining, as glaciers of Mont Blanc, the pure examples of Tell, of Winkleried, and of Hofer, keep heavenly watch over the hills of Alpine republics; thus, even now, upon degenerate Greece, Leonidas looks from Thermopylae and Bozzaris from his battle-grave. Thus Sobieski's spirit broods over Polish patriotism. Thus Brutus and Rienzi glide out of their tombs, to mingle with Italian revolutions, and to stand on either side of Garibaldi. Thus Washington arises over the sinking billows of disunion, and towers in his olden majesty, the guardian genius of the Republic which he created. Who shall aver that there is no sublime relationship between the grand souls of those who found or preserve a nation and the soul of the nation itself? The Greeks believed their chiefs and warriors to be constellated after death, and that thus, from Heavenly heights, they looked down on their countrymen. "Ab castra ad astra! He has ascended from the camp to the stars!" said a Latin poet of his departed hero; and it was, at least, a beautiful superstition which invented the fable of Castor and Pollux returning from their place in the skies to mingle with Greeks and Trojans on the plains of Ilium. If there be memory in a future world—and without memory that soul would be annihilated—we cannot choose but believe that our martyrs and heroes of the past are interested in the country and kindred that were their own in mortal life.

Surely, then, we may admire that simple trust which, in the days of chivalry, imparted to a soldier the assurance that a champion saint and guardian of his native land fought with her armies, and inspired her leaders. "St. George for England!" "St. Denis for France!" and "St. James for Spain!" were battle-cries that bore with them a faith worth more than swords and lances.

And our "St. George" was Washington! the republican chief and statesman whose lofty figure fills the open portal of our country's grandeur, his one hand linked with old-time chivalry, and his other clasping democracy type of the nobility and model for the people. George Washington, the man whose life built up a wall against ancient tyrannies and a watch-tower for future liberties. I recognize the very hand of Providence in those events which raised this representative republican to his great ordeal and victory; the same hand which led up Moses and David from wilderness flock-keeping; which pointed the stars to Colon, and the Rock of Plymouth to Mayflower Pilgrims; that

Hand which beckons the oppressed and persecuted of all climes to this Western Continent, here to find "freedom to worship God," and here to consecrate a nation worthy to become His chosen in the work of a mysterious future.

George Washington was more a type of old paladins, whereof we read in romance, than of modern generals of armies. His was the genius that stands, calm and god-like, creating order out of chaos, organizing victory from the fragments of repulse. He was removed, by the pride of his nature, the self-sustenance of his character, from the influence of common ambition and of customary incentives. Contemporaries called him cold and haughty; he was simply reserved and self-abiding. He was impressed with the dignity of manhood unspotted by contact with the vices and follies which marked the age in which he lived; an age when the *ancien regime* of France, under Louis XV., was culminating the crimes of centuries in one generation—a generation to be blotted out in blood; an age of free thinking, of licentiousness, of heartless frivolity in the Old World; but an age, also, of stern endurance, brave hoping, unflinching effort in the New World, represented by the countrymen of Washington. And as Louis the Magnificent, and Marlborough, and the French philosophers, and the British ministers of George Third, represented decaying systems and effete opinions of the Past, so, on the other hand, George Washington became the representative and the pioneer-man of a Future, which was to be fresh, renovated, healthful, and hopeful for humanity. The American Revolution was pre-ordained, I cannot doubt, as a great dividing-work between the Old and the New; George Washington was the chosen director of that work; and God blessed him in its success.

Centuries of oppression; generations of tyrants and slaves; cycles and decades of agonized endurance; and then, leaping up in volcanic flames—a Revolution! I care not whether the wrong be religious, or political, or social; whether the despotism be over mind or body; whether the victims be feudal serfs, or Indian pariahs; or Greek Helots, or negro slaves; there comes, and must come, sooner or later, the day of Revolution—the hour of Retribution. There is a Nemesis of Nations as well as of Individuals; and upon the track of crime—whether it be perpetrated against a People or a Man—the hounds of justice are forever baying.

In vain, O Feudal France, your kings and barons combined to exterminate the *Jacquerie*; that mob of peasant-men and laborers, rising, age after age, to assert its claim to Manhood! Vainly, O Feudal England! your Norman chivalry struck down, at intervals, under its mace, some Wat the Tyler and some Jack Cade, rebel-democrats, who groped about in mediaeval shadows, bearing dim torch-lights of Liberty, and who wrote upon their rule banners a question that no clerk could answer:

"When Adam de'ed, and Eve span,  
Who was then the 'Gentleman'?"

Vain are axes and gibbets, and chains and whips, against rough pioneer-republicans of this sort. The people's first champions are always martyrs, dying like Gracchus or Rienzi, sometimes by the hands of foes, and too often in the house of friend. Multitudinous waves must dash against the rocky foundations or encompassing sands of Tyranny's stronghold, before the old traditional strength of them can be undermined or encroached upon. But, though myriads of these waves break, disperse, and retire, there is a great ocean always behind them. Thus, with all martyred patriots and freedom-seekers of centuries and ages gone by. They were the incessant waves, dashing themselves to fragments; but behind them were Revolutions and Retributions. Behind the *Jacquerie* of France and the Risings of England, were the dark gatherings of popular wrath, and the advancing tides of democratic power, that must sweep Charles Stuart from his throne to a scaffold, and Louis Capet from his palace to the guillotine. After the *Jacquerie*, in good time, was to come the Reign of Terror and the French Republic, and the Corsican. After Wat Tyler and Jack Cade were to come Cromwell and his

Ironsides. So these procrastinations of justice, in which kings and men indulge; these dalliances with hoary wrongs; these denials of Truth and Right that go on, year after year, and from generation to generation, must have an end, always, under God's ordinances. If the Aztec tribes, enthroned upon the lakes of Tezcuco, trod down during ages the children of Tlascala, anon, when Cortez appeared on Mexican borders, the Tlascalans flocked under Spanish chiefs, and hurled back their wrath upon Aztec oppressors. Thus the tyranny of a dominant tribe begot and nursed internal enemies, whereby the stranger gained foothold in Mexico, and her ancient people were exterminated. If the Spaniards, in their turn, grew tyrannous, and ruled a conquered race with stripes and tortures, chains and degradations, Heaven reversed its judgments, and the Spaniards found themselves the prey of civil wars, of treasons, revolutions, and conspiracies. God's law of Retribution smites the Mexican land incessantly. That Nemesis of Nations scourges all the Spanish countries, from Sierra Madre down to Patagonian headlands. Everywhere a trail of vengeance follows wrong-doing. Three centuries and a half of Spanish, French, Portuguese, Dutch, and Brazilian domination over weaker races have scored their chronicles in blood; and the end is not yet. Massacres of St. Domingo, Maroon wars, hereditary quarrels of races, hecatombs of kidnapped blacks drowned, flayed and tortured, on the ocean, and on mainlands and islands; continual stripes, barbarian warfare; thus the history of this New World duplicates all miseries of the Old; because the Law of Retribution will force out its consequences. Brute oppression must be punished, even by instruments brutal as itself. The Doom must fall. The executioner is sacred till his blow descends. After their work is done, the gallows and block may be burned; but as instruments of justice they were consecrated.

Yet revolutions never go backward. "A cannon-ball," said Lamartine, "having struck a wall, rebounds; but the wall is no stronger for the concussion!" Strokes of right are like strokes of Fate; irresistible, irreversible. The Mississippi cannot retreat upon the Missouri, though you shall dam it, and embank against it; and though the ocean tides flow back over its bars, driven by tropical storms. Steadily and inexorably the great volume must tend seaward, and mingle with the immensity of ocean. God's laws take note of its currents thereafter. So the great river of human progression moves majestically forward. Fleets may battle upon its bosom; forts thunder from its banks; multitudes of dead sink into its depths; islands, shores, habitations, edifices, may be engulfed by it; but the tremendous stream rolls on. You cannot barricade it; you cannot curb or back it.

And the preparations for revolution forever continue. Great questions and truths, surging under Society's crust, cast up their leaders and champions, in age after age; at one time Moses, at another Mahomet, afterward Luther, anon Cromwell, presently Washington, and, in good time, LINCOLN.

Very different, in power, character and conception, are all these Representative Men of Human Progress; but they are each of a succession; links of a grand catena which unites generations and regenerations in an electric impulsion, toward greater results. The chain is never broken; a succession, surer than the apostolic succession of churches, distinguishes this hierarchy of heroic leaders in the march of Right. Certainly as a general falls in the battle, so certainly is an infant soldier born into the ranks, hereafter to become a general. The priests of Thibet, who worship a Grand Lama, assure the multitude that when their Deity dies his spirit enters into the body of a babe; and, henceforth, the babe is deified and worshipped as the Grand Lama. Such a superstition becomes fact when applied to the succession of immortal beings who identify their lives with the cause of Truth and Freedom. The Deity which inspires them cannot die, but passes from form to form through the ages, transfiguring one hero after another with the recognizable glory of his mission.

When Abraham Lincoln was born in penury and privation, from the loins of a sober yeoman, whose mental

culture had compassed only the scrawling of his own humble signature; when the name given to this child was the name of a pioneer grandsire killed and scalped by savages; when a lowly log-hut and a life of toil were the *res angusti domi* of this scion of obscurity,—who could then have discerned any hero-nimbus upon the infant's forehead? Who would have hailed, under the rattlers of this backwoods home, the future Liberator of a Race? Yet, Abraham Lincoln, under Almighty Providence, was a link of the unbroken chain—a hero of the immortal succession—which has descended through Hebrews, and Greeks, and Romans, and Germans, and Gauls, and Britons; manifested and glorified in all ages, nations, and races, through conflicts, and sufferings, and triumphs, and martyrdoms.

When Abraham Lincoln opened his eyes upon the rude surroundings of his mother's home, in the year of Christian history eighteen hundred and nine, there was then need for the translation of a new hero-soul into mortal flesh; and it was full time for the avatar of a fresh leader of the future.

At that time, Liberty was a mockery in the Old World; Gallic independence, conceived and born in blood and revenge, had been strangled already in its cradle, and the betrayer of a Republic had crowned himself with the imperial laurels of a Caesar. One Corsican—the patriot Pascal de Paoli—had just died in bitter exile, disappointed in all his hopes of Liberty; another Corsican—Bonaparte—was divorcing his true wife, in order to secure an alliance with tyrants, and a dynasty of usurpation. French armies, after bearing the eagles of Liberty across Alps and Pyrenees, were now stifling Spanish patriotism in the blood of its defenders, at Saragossa, and striving to tread down freedom into snows of the Tyrol. Hofer, the last hero of that Alpine race which gave Tell and Winkelried to the World, was at this time held for execution, because he had struck for his Republic.

Black slaves, having broken their rusted fetters, were struggling desperately in St. Domingo. Napoleon had deposed the Pope, and the Pope had excommunicated Napoleon. And, to crown all, the servile Senate of France, welcoming an Imperial Master on their knees, had hailed him as "the greatest of heroes, who ever achieved victories but for the happiness of the world."

Was it not time, in this year 1809—when Freedom lay supine, and made no sign, in elder lands; was it not full time that a man-child should be born into this new continent, with the mark of a great mission imprinted upon his soul? So, then, unnoticed and obscurely, the backwoods infant was suckled by his pious mother, and held in the stout arms of his father, the laborer, till such hour as his sinews waxed strong, and his young mind expanded, and he went forth into the wide world, a democrat among democracies, to take his place as a sovereign elector, seepetred by the ballot.

But this boy's path into the world's arena lay through years of toil and hardship; toil and hardships cheered by little boyish recreation. Books were rare in the wilderness of Indiana and Illinois; companions were few; and the child's own mother died ere he was nine years old. Then came the mysterious yearning for "light" in this dawning intellect; thereafter the quest for odd volumes and sparse reading; and in good time the treasures of a "Pilgrim's Progress," a "Life of Henry Clay," a "Life of Washington," a copy of "Æsop's Fables." These representative books were, doubtless, foundation-stones in the life-structure of a representative man. Never did they sustain a simpler or grander edifice than the soul of Abraham Lincoln.

Out of the farm-toils of boyhood; out of the splitting of rails to fence his father's homestead, our future President steps on the deck of a flatboat—a green hand, hired at ten dollars a month, to voyage the Mississippi to New Orleans.

The youth is full-statured in manhood now, standing six feet four, with an erect head and a brave front, and his large eyes looking the world in the face unshrinkingly. Those eyes were open, we may be sure, while the flatboat was passing through slave plantations, and lying



by at levees, and made fast under the shadow of negro auction-rooms. Our Illinois rail-splitter was measuring, unconsciously, perhaps, the timber of that upas-growth which choked the rich development of Southern nature.

A campaign against that savage race which had slain his grandfather; a few years of self training as clerk in a back settlement store; a few years of trade for himself; and we find Abraham Lincoln, at the age of twenty-three, a law student, a land-surveyor and a candidate for the Illinois Legislature. Two years afterward he is elected, and twice re-elected, and thereafter settles down, as a lawyer, at Springfield Illinois.

Thus on the highway of public and political life; thus step by step, from the backwoods, and the pile of split rails, and the flat-boat, and the village store, this humble man, who was born in the year 1809, when Freedom had expired in France, and its last hero, was doomed to death in Mantua; this low born democrat of the New World, pursued the march of his destiny, and assumed his place in the succession of leaders foreordained by the Almighty to the service of Humanity.

Moving at his side, and even-paced with his growth, the Wrongs and Rights of our Republic were accomplishing their probation.

The slave-power and the free-power were advancing from diverse points toward an inevitable conflict; and God willed, as he, without doubt, provided, that Abraham Lincoln should stand in the gap of battle. Therefore had he been nurtured to humility and endurance in youth; therefore accustomed to thought and action in manhood; therefore exalted to public confidence and station; therefore elevated to the Congress of our Republic; therefore selected, above all the giants of politics, to become the standard-bearer of a great movement, which was to be the beginning of a Revolution. Who shall deny that the Hand of God was in this? Who shall ascribe to political chance the Union of the Hour with the Man—of the Cause with the Champion?

Our war against Rebellion was a great Missionary field; its gospel was Liberty; its apostles were warriors and Martyrs; its pulpits were Fortresses and Gun-ships; its preachers were those "sons of thunder"—the Artillery; on whose throats might have been engraven, as on Cromwell's cannon—"open thou our mouths, O Lord! and our lips shall speak forth thy praise!"

What a divine thrill penetrated the loyal North, like electric fire, when Sumter fell! How the telegraph spark passed from soul to soul, like that firebrand which summoned, of old, the Scottish clans to mustering places and battle lines! How the minute-men of freedom sprang from Bay State fields, from Green Mountains and White Mountains, from valleys of Connecticut and waters of Rhode Island, and headlands of Maine! How New York replied from ocean to lakes; and the rivers of Pennsylvania and plains of New Jersey, and woods of Delaware and Maryland, echoed the War-Cry of "Union" that rang through all the mighty West, from Ohio's banks to far-away shores of the Pacific!

Then it was that the doors of recruiting offices swarmed with eager thousands hastening to enroll their names upon the lists of glory. Then regiments were born in a day, and marched away, full-armored, in a week. Then the tramp of legions shook our City streets, and there was hurrying of companies and detachments, and squads, through every quiet village, to join the ranks of comrades ordered to the War.

There was no holding back or faltering at that Spring-tide of loyal enthusiasm. Armed men sprang up on every side. No bounty-money then to stimulate the soldier; no brokerage of manly service; no buying of substitutes; no flights to Canada; no cowardly skulking from duty. These vile things were to grow afterward along with money-greed, and speculation in Government Loans and "Shoddy" contracts, and frauds upon the soldier, and swindling in high places. But in that fresh outburst of gallant zeal—that spontaneous gush of true manhood—there was but one passion—Patriotism; there was but one purpose—to stand by the Republic!

How like the brave days of '76 seems that season of militia-muster on Boston Common; when the yeoman came

marching in, as their fathers had done, from Lexington, and Concord, and Pepperill, and Worcester, and the Heights of Charlestown, and Dorchester.

How the old Revolutionary fire blazed up in the Park of New York city, when ten thousand sons of patriot sires sped thitherward, as in the time of Sears, and Schuyler, and Mac Dougal, to register their vows of loyalty on the ancient, sacred neighborhood of Golden Hill, where freemen had once battled against freedom's foes. How the men of Chester, and of Valley Forge, and of Germantown, came rushing to the Hall of Independence in Philadelphia; there to band themselves in a new "Pennsylvania Line," to hear a new tocsin from the antique belfry, proclaiming "Liberty throughout the and," and a new "Declaration" assuring its blessings to "all the inhabitants thereof."

It was an hour—a spectacle—worth lifetimes of common experience. Men were created in that hour out of the dust of mere traffickers and money-grubbers. Souls were rained upon, as with Pentecostal fire, and the muck of their every-day surroundings was burned off from them. Indeed, I doubt not that the true Republic, the new nation of our Future, was conceived in that hour of patriotic love and fervor, to be thereafter born from the embrace of Freedom and Union; born to an immortality beyond all nations and republics of the past.

Was it strange that the seeds of heroes should be planted at this glowing season of unselfishness; seeds to spring up under suns and showers of battle, into a harvest of grand achievement? We were dead, indeed, as a People, had there been no vital germ implanted in our lives, to blossom, in good time, unto fruitage of honor. But our Republic, though smitten sorely with the leprosy of Slavery had never yet been poisoned at the fount of its ancestral love for Liberty. The blood of Warren and Wooster mingled with the crystal rivers of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and those streams became the daily drink of their descendants. The spirit of Herkimer still brooded in Mohawk valleys; the heart of Mercer had not ceased to throb on the breeze that blew over Jersey war fields; and the echoes of "Mad Anthony's" battle-cry had not died amid the glens of Pennsylvania. So the old pulse soon throbbed under fever of new impulses; the worth of Revolutionary blood asserted itself; and with it arose a fresh tide of loyal devotion welling from other veins—veins not kindred with American lineage, but generously kindred with Democratic freedom—veins full of the nation's coming life, and rich in the promise of patriotism! Glorified with the same lustre as our own is the blood of our foreign-born citizens—that blood which mingles with ours in all the Southern soil; which nourishes, like ours, the roots of our freedom-tree, which ripens, with ours, in a glorious harvest of blessings on a land that is the common heritage of mankind.

I had never a fear for the Republic while beholding the scenes of April and May of 1861: while curbing my exuberant heart, that always leaped to the throat at sight of our brave boys buckling their arms on and kissing the mothers who bore them, and the sisters who loved them, perhaps for the last, last time! I had never a fear for the country, though my eyelids grew often moist when the ranks marched by me so proudly and the people shouted for them, and the matrons and maids waved kerchiefs that were wet with the tears of their proud affection. And afterward—at the midnight of our cause—I had only to recall the memory of those sacred days, to feel that we were still assured of triumph and secure of freedom. God would not have given such promise had he not mercifully designed its realization.

And throughout that terrible conflict—that fierce battle of Armageddon, which at last, under Eternal Wisdom, smote down the forces of American slavery—how singularly commensurate with our National necessities were the qualities of our National ruler. Abraham Lincoln wielded the axes of our Republic's lictors, as he had long ago wielded the axes of his father, to clear the wilderness of impediments, to let the light of heaven into long-shrouded labyrinths, and to build up new borders for the expanding area of Freedom. The homely jest, the arch smile were for a desponding people, to cheer and

encourage; the laboring brain, the racked thought were for himself, unseen by men, to shape out of rugged danger the free future of his country. A renowned warrior might have shattered the Republic; an ambitious statesman might have betrayed it; a profound philosopher might have bewildered it; a brilliant genius might have wrecked it; but a simple, honest man—a Christian ruler—saved it.

Abraham Lincoln fell at the gate of freedom, which he had kept so well. He fell not as a ruler, but as a FATHER, his hands outstretched in parlon, his lips murmuring words of mercy, his heart overflowing with charity for even the worst of his enemies. And when he fell, there you, and I and Freedom's self fell down and uttered one great wail of lamentation. Not America alone, but the world, gave token of bereavement, its voice a requiem, its expression an elegy; the death-song of a leader, a ruler, a liberator; chanted as no death-song was ever before chanted—undertoned by a feeling deeper than was ever invoked by the demise of monarchs or the immolation of heroes. Great men perish in all ages. Their funeral processions move from century to century; their monuments arise in all the corridors of history. But if we consider the relations which Abraham Lincoln sustained to the most vital interests of humanity; if we reflect upon the tremendous results involved in that mighty drama of progress, whereof Abraham Lincoln was the chief personage, we must acknowledge that no recorded tragedy approaches our own in momentous significance, and that no other mortal victim presents so sublime and affecting a sacrifice.

Rome had her Marcus Curtius, who rode, full armored, into a gulf that his country might be relieved from threatened peril; her high priest *Decius*, who offered his life as a mediation between contending armies; her imperial Caesar, who sank under the daggers of conspiracy. Switzerland had her Winkelried, who gave his bosom to Austrian spears, that he might "make a path for Liberty!" A host of martyrs have glorified freedom and religion on the scaffold and at the stake. Hecatombs of kingly lives have been heaped upon the altars of war and retribution. But there was never a human sacrifice more pure than that which bereaved this Republic of our wise, our faithful, our well-beloved Abraham Lincoln.

The character of this Man asks no labored eulogium. His life was its own panegyric.

As a statesman, clear-seeing, thoughtful, inflexibly honest; as a Ruler, just, discreet, merciful; as a man kind-hearted, genial, reliable; as a citizen plain, democratic, unassuming; as a Christian, humble, unostentatious, sincere; he walked the ways of private and public station in a single-minded, guileless devotedness to his country's good; climbing, step by step to greatness, and passing at last from Martyrdom to Immortality.

Abraham Lincoln was a chosen man: chosen for Death, as well as for Life. It is probable that the peculiar combination of personal qualities which made up his simple, earnest, practical character, contributed more to the successful conduct of our National affairs than the most transcendent abilities of a consummate statesman or soldier could have done.

He possessed that within his nature which made him the conductor of a great People.

He had no repelling antagonisms; no selfish traits to alarm egotism; no duplicity, concealing ambition. Open, unsuspecting, fraternal, forgiving, he loved his country, revered her constitution, but—above all, he worshipped that divine spirit which we call *Liberty*.

To such a man—chosen from the People's ranks, and trained in the school of early trial, hewing his own way out of obscurity—to this representative man was entrusted by Eternal Wisdom the guidance of our nation through a War of Deliverance. His allotted task was

achieved; the harvest of his toil had been reaped; our Republic was garnering the golden ripeness of Victory, and the olives of Peace were springing at her feet, when in an instant under God's permission, the Chief was stricken down as with a thunderbolt, and the nation shaken as by an earthquake.

They made his grave in the Great West. It will be a place of Pilgrimage, even as this solemn anniversary of the Martyr's death must become a sacred day, to be commemorated hereafter, as your thoughtful German piety and the love which you bear to freedom, have taught you here to commemorate it.

Over the grave of Abraham Lincoln, in the Western land, will gleam for Pilgrim eyes hereafter, a guiding star like that which led the Magians of old to Bethlehem. Let it be the Star of Empire, if you will. For me it is the Star of Liberty. Freedom broadens toward the Western skies, like a glorious sunset—a setting which prefigures an arising hereafter, and breaks already upon shadows of the East beyond it.

"Westward the Star of Empire takes its way."

That Star of Empire is the Star of Liberty, guiding Columbus to his New World, leading forth Pilgrim men to Plymouth Rock, ascendant over George Washington, the Champion of Independence, and fixed like a planet above the grave of Abraham Lincoln, the Emancipator of Races.

Wondrously significant to him who reads aright is the bright procession of our Stars into the shadows which they are to disperse, the obscurities they must irradiate.

Star after star emerging from calm blue ether; orb after orb wheeling into musical march; how sublime this astral review between Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

To the eye of faith there is a meaning in the history of States, as traced upon the flag of our Republic—that starry chart of Destiny. Thirteen Stripes remain as they were fixed by Revolutionary hands, types and memorials of States that are foundation-stones of a great Nation's structure, immutable as symbols, equal in place and proportion. But the Stars—those emblems of glory and empire—have become manifold in number, and like the noonday sun in splendor. The thirteen are born into thirty-seven. Our trackless wildernesses are nebulae of nations—star-germs, ripening into galaxies. And as each resplendent centre radiates into sister spheres, and pours its brightness to the common core of light, all shadows of the Past and Future may well flee away; all darkness, in which human tribes and races are fearfully waiting, may well be seamed and rifted.

Meantime, how grand the spectacle of Republics bound in one divisionless Republic! Though the Rebellion, like Lucifer, trailed a third part of the Stars behind its crimson chariot, their fall, thank God! was not "like Lucifer's—never to rise again!" Already they arise; already glitter through the mist of gory dust that dimmed their lustre. Anon, they will beam again, with old, celestial brilliancy. Ere long their wondering and deflected rays will stream from the old central core of light and glory. It was a stormy midnight that obscured them—a night of murkiness and unclean vapors. But the blue ether is around them now once more. The heavens of Freedom reclaim them!

Advance, then, O march of stars—majestic in the front of our republic! I accept the New World as an arena of manhood—as a field of progressive conquest. I look for its generations to enlarge into the symmetry and proportions of a New People and a New Republic. The Star of Columbus and Discovery is of the Past. The Star of Lincoln and Liberty illumines the Present. The Star of Redemption will yet arise, its zenith irradiating a Brotherhood of Humanity—its horizon embracing a Democracy of the World!









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